

Claim Amendments

1. (currently amended) A system, comprising:

a splitter unit that comprises a port that is electrically connected directly to a connector of a plain old telephone service ("POTS") interface circuit of a switch of a central office, wherein the splitter unit and the POTS interface circuit are operably located on a same shelf; and

a protector that is located in the central office and electrically connected to a cable that comprises a connector that is electrically connected with a connector of the splitter unit.

2. (currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the ~~connect~~ connector of the POTS interface circuit comprises a plural number of connection points; and

wherein the splitter unit comprises a plural number of splitter components equal in number and electrically connectable to the plural number of connection points of the POTS interface circuit.

3. (previously amended) The system of claim 2, wherein the port of the splitter unit is employable to electrically connect directly each of the plural number of splitter components with a respective one of the plural number of connection points of the POTS interface circuit.

4. (previously amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the connector of the POTS interface circuit comprises a plural number of connection points; and

wherein the port comprises a plural number of subports equal in number and electrically connectable directly to the plural number of connection points of the POTS interface circuit.

5. (previously amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the port comprises a port that is electrically connectable directly to a connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office.

6. (previously amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the port comprises a male interface that is electrically connectable directly to a female interface that comprises the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office.

7. (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the port comprises a first port; and wherein the splitter unit comprises a second port that is electrically connectable directly to a connector of a tip and ring cable of the central office, wherein the second port is electrically connected to the first port.

8. (currently amended) The system of claim 7, wherein the ~~step of selecting the splitter unit to comprise the second port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the tip and ring cable of the central office comprises the step of:~~

~~selecting the second port to comprises~~ a female interface that is electrically connectable directly to a male interface that comprises the connector of the tip and ring cable of the central office.

9. (previously amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the splitter unit comprises a first splitter unit, wherein the POTS interface circuit comprises a first interface circuit, and further comprising:

a second splitter unit that comprises a port that is electrically connectable directly to a connector of a second interface circuit of the switch of the central office.

10. (original) The system of claim 1, wherein the splitter unit is employable to prepare one or more lines of the central office for asymmetric digital subscriber line service.

11. (previously amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the POTS interface circuit comprises a physical dimension; and

wherein the splitter unit comprises a physical dimension that substantially matches the physical dimension of the POTS interface circuit.

12. (previously amended) The system of claim 11, wherein the physical dimension of the POTS interface circuit comprises a first physical dimension of the POTS interface circuit, wherein the POTS interface circuit comprises a second physical dimension; and

wherein the splitter unit comprises a second physical dimension that substantially matches the second physical dimension of the POTS interface circuit.

13. (currently amended) A method, comprising the steps of:

selecting a splitter unit that comprises a port that is electrically connected directly to a connector of a POTS interface circuit of a switch of a central office, wherein the splitter unit and the POTS interface circuit are operably located on a same shelf; and

electrically connecting a protector of the central office to a cable that comprises a connector that is electrically connected to a connector of the splitter unit.

14. (previously amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the connector of the POTS interface circuit comprises a plural number of connection points, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit that comprises the port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office comprises the step of:

selecting the splitter unit to comprise a plural number of splitter components equal in number and electrically connectable to the plural number of connection points of the POTS interface circuit.

15. (previously amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit that comprises the port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office comprises the step of:

employing the port of the splitter unit to electrically connect directly each of the plural number of splitter components with a respective one of the plural number of connection points of the POTS interface circuit.

16. (previously amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the connector of the POTS interface circuit comprises a plural number of connection points, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit that comprises the port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office comprises the step of:

selecting the port to comprise a plural number of subports equal in number and electrically connectable directly to the plural number of connection points of the POTS interface circuit.

17. (previously amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit that comprises the port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office comprises the step of:

selecting the port to comprise a port that is electrically connectable directly to a connector of the POTS of the switch of the central office.

18. (previously amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit that comprises the port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office comprises the step of:

selecting the port to comprise a male interface that is electrically connectable directly to a female interface that comprises the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office.

19. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the port comprises a first port, and further comprising the step of:

selecting the splitter unit to comprise a second port that is electrically connectable directly to a connector of a tip and ring cable of the central office, wherein the second port is electrically connected to the first port.

20. (original) The method of claim 19, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit to comprise the second port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the tip and ring cable of the central office comprises the step of:

selecting the second port to comprise a female interface that is electrically connectable directly to a male interface that comprises the connector of the tip and ring cable of the central office.

21. (previously amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the splitter unit comprises a first splitter unit, wherein the POTS interface circuit comprises a first interface circuit, and further comprising the step of:

selecting a second splitter unit that comprises a port that is electrically connectable directly to a connector of a second interface circuit of the switch of the central office.

22. (previously amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit that comprises the port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office comprises the step of:

employing the splitter unit to prepare one or more lines of the central office for asymmetric digital subscriber line service.

23. (previously amended) The method of claim 13, wherein the POTS interface circuit comprises a physical dimension, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit that comprises the port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office comprises the step of:

selecting the splitter unit to comprise a physical dimension that substantially matches the physical dimension of the POTS interface circuit.

24. (previously amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the physical dimension of the POTS interface circuit comprises a first physical dimension of the POTS interface circuit, wherein the POTS interface circuit comprises a second physical dimension, wherein the step of selecting the splitter unit that comprises the port that is electrically connectable directly to the connector of the POTS interface circuit of the switch of the central office comprises the step of:

selecting the splitter unit to comprise a second physical dimension that substantially matches the second physical dimension of the POTS interface circuit.

25. (previously added) The system of claim 1, wherein operably locating the splitter unit on the shelf with the POTS interface circuit serves to reduce a wiring length between the splitter unit and the POTS interface circuit.

26. (previously added) The system of claim 1, wherein the shelf is located in a rack, wherein operably locating the splitter unit on the shelf with the POTS interface circuit serves to increase an amount of available space in the rack.

27. (previously added) The system of claim 1, wherein the splitter unit and the POTS interface circuit connect to form an integral unit.

28. (new) The system of claim 1, wherein the connector of the cable comprises a first port, wherein the connector of the splitter unit comprises a second port, wherein the first port comprises a male interface, wherein the second port comprises a female interface;

wherein the male interface and the female interface engage to electrically connect the cable with the splitter unit.

29. (new) The system of claim 28, wherein the first port comprises a first plurality of subports, wherein the second port comprises a second plurality of subports;

wherein each one of the first plurality of subports connects directly to a respective one of the second plurality of subports.

30. (new) The system of claim 1, wherein the cable comprises one or more lines, wherein the protector connects to a first end portion of the one or more lines, wherein the splitter unit connects to a second end portion of the one or more lines.

31. (new) The system of claim 1, wherein the cable comprises a POTS and asymmetric digital subscriber line, wherein the POTS and asymmetric digital subscriber line comprises a tip wire and a ring wire.

32. (new) The system of claim 1, wherein the cable comprises a first cable, wherein the protector connects with an outside plant through a second cable;

wherein the protector couples the second cable from the outside plant with the first cable to the splitter unit.

33. (new) The system of claim 32, wherein the protector receives signals from the outside plant through the second cable;

wherein the protector transmits the signals from the second cable to the splitter unit through the first cable.

34. (new) The system of claim 32, wherein the protector shields the central office from potential over-voltage and/or over-current received from the outside plant over the second cable.

35. (new) The system of claim 1, wherein the protector resides within a main distribution frame, wherein the cable connects the splitter unit with the main distribution frame.

36. (new) The system of claim 1, wherein the cable comprises one or more POTS and asymmetric digital subscriber lines;

wherein the protector is electrically connected to one or more tip wires and one or more ring wires from an outside plant;

wherein the protector couples one or more of the one or more tip wires and one or more of the one or more ring wires to one or more of the one or more POTS and asymmetric digital subscriber lines.

37. (new) The method of claim 13, wherein the protector resides within a main distribution frame, wherein the step of electrically connecting the protector of the central office to the cable that comprises the connector that is electrically connected to the connector of the splitter unit comprises the steps of:

electrically connecting the splitter unit with the main distribution frame through the cable.

38. (new) The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of:

electrically connecting the splitter unit with an outside plant through the protector to shield the central office from potential over-voltage and/or over-current received from the outside plant.